



**ASHEVILLE TRANSIT COMMISSION**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Police/Fire Training Room-Municipal Building**  
**May 12, 2010 4:30-6:30**

**Attending:**

Commission Members: Dave Erb, Hanna Raskin, Tom Tomlin, J Neal Jackson, Georgia M. Shannon, Kevin Jenkins, Paul Van Heden

Staff: Mariate Echeverry, Edna Johnson, Janet GeorgeMurr

Community members: Tom Herman of NCDOT, David Hastings

4:30 p.m.: Hanna opened the meeting.

**Agenda Amendments:**

- Add: Under Staff Updates: Increase of fares public meeting

**Explanation of Public Comment Standards and Opportunities:**

- Paul read the standards of procedures regarding public comment.

**April 14, 2010 Transit Commission Retreat Minters–** was reviewed and approved by Transit Commission members

**Welcome Public – Introductions and Pre-Meeting Public Comment**

- Hanna welcomed the public requesting an introduction of each member of Transit Commission, staff and public. At this time, Hanna asked the public for any pre-meeting comments and none were given.
- Tom Herman, NCDOT
- David Hastings – bi-coastal from Colorado to Asheville and member of the Broomfield Task Force for Transit.
- Staff and Transit Commission members introduced themselves.

**Presentations:**

- Paul Van Heden presented Hanna a plaque for her outstanding work as Chairman on Transit Commission and service as a member for years. Hanna expressed progress of the TC and said good-bye to everyone. Hanna will be moving to Dallas to be food critic of the Dallas newspaper.
- Paul presented a brief PowerPoint Presentation on ¼ cent sales tax: Despite recent improvements multimodal infrastructure in Buncombe County is lackluster, especially on the county side. House bill 148 also known as Congestion Relief/Intermodal Transportation Fund establishes a fund for the multimodal project municipalities can apply to allow counties to enact a vehicle registration fee. This fee will not exceed \$7.00; allows the establishment of a ¼ cent sales tax to be dedicated to multi-modal infrastructure. If House bill 148 is enacted Buncombe County could receive approx, \$7,200,000, which would mean that Asheville Transit could receive \$5,904,000. Paul continued with the pros and cons of the sales tax and an action plan such as Mecklenburg. There was a question and answer session. Mariate stated that in Miami there was a ½% tax for the transit system, but projects can be diversified and include bike and ped projects that connect with transit.. Hanna asked about a County or City official to take on the task. Mariate stated that it will take a leader to champion this project.



## NEW BUSINESS

- **Retreat Debriefing:** Hanna asked if the location for the TC retreat was suitable for future retreats. The members agreed to have future TC retreats at Asheville Design Center. Hanna asked about the facilitator – Paul liked the facilitator, Kathy Marth, and had no objections and the format was good. Hanna asked what the TC got from the Retreat. Mariate mentioned that the last retreat was in 2007 and if the members would like the retreat annually or bi-annually.
- **Priorities for 2010:** Hanna asked about TC goals for next year.
  - Kevin mentioned that he would shepherd the Transit Master Plan for Sunday service;
  - Hanna mentioned Transportation Congress; how to structure TC on tasks assignments; Hanna stated that a need for opportunities to choose roles/responsibilities and that the Chairperson position is a job in and of itself;
  - Dave mentioned Transit Consolidation study; bus design;
  - Paul stated that social media and outreach.
- **Commission Structure:**
- Hanna asked the TC members who would like to take on the job as Chairperson.
  - Paul volunteered to prepare the agenda and to Chair the TC meetings.
  - Tom nominated J Neal as Vice Chair and J Neal accepted.
  - Hanna mentioned that there will be a vacancy when she leaves in May and that Julie Mayfield applied the last time who worked on the Transit Master Plan and Western Carolina Alliance. Hanna asked TC to back Julie. A motion was made by Dave, seconded by Paul and Kevin and all in favor. Paul stated that at the last Council meeting, an announcement for new TC member was made. Hanna spoke with 2 or 3 council members to support Julie Mayfield.
  - Paul will prepare the monthly agenda.
  - J Neal as Vice Chair, who will also preside at meetings.
  - Georgia mentioned that she has been involved with J Neal in other meetings and he does an excellent job.
  - Dave mentioned that J Neal is the senior member of TC.
  - Paul asked J Neal to book presenters who are interested in the effects and benefits of transit.
  - Paul will work with Georgia on the marketing of transit.
  - Dave will send a note to the three groups of Sustainability Commission, Greenway Commission and Bike and Ped Commission in order for a TC member to participate.
  - Kevin mentioned that J Neal was the main person to speak out about Sunday service and suggested J Neal take the lead. J Neal indicated that he will take the lead on Sunday service and will need help from all of the members of TC.
  - Hanna delineated a summary of her duties as Chairperson:

To aid our discussion next month, I'm providing here a summary of what I do. Some of the tasks are directly related to my chairmanship, while others could be handled by any commission member:

    1. Develop and annotate the agenda (Kevin and Tom.) I draft an agenda each month according to our notes, send it to commission members for approval and then annotate each item (Paul.)
    2. Maintain the bulletin board at the Transit Center. I change the board's design monthly to highlight various events or topics pertaining to local transit (Kevin and Tom.)
    3. Administer the @ashevillebus account. I use Twitter to broadcast service changes, delays and transit news (Paul.)
    4. Lobby council members and other elected officials. In addition to meeting monthly with Gordon and coordinating meetings between commission and council members, I regularly call and e-mail council members concerning transit issues.
    5. Present the Transit 101 course to interested groups (Chairperson to do public meetings.
    6. Represent the Transit Commission on boards and committees such as Strive Not to Drive.
    7. Coordinate with chairs of other boards and commissions involved with multimodal issues.



## 8. New member recruitment

The chair is also responsible for running meetings, preparing a yearly report for council, facilitating the orientation of new members, dealing with the press and responding to rider complaints and suggestions.

- **Bus design/color scheme:**

- Hanna asked if any of the TC members were interested in being on the task force. Mariate stated that at this time there has been only one meeting. She has met with the designer who had a book of colors. The idea is to have a small committee to select colors; one being from TC. There will be two colors to decide upon which will be the designer's job, who is Devon Martin. She will look at the guidelines to include ridership and branding. Then approach City Council with a proposal. Extra design will cost extra and that this project is tied to the marketing plan. The task force will have three to four sample colors to choose from and since the time is compressed, another meeting is scheduled for 5/24/10, with the members who are readily available. The two colors are included in the cost and the colors will not match the old colors. Hanna mentioned that the current new buses will be painted.
- Paul stated that Council approved a marketing plan. Mariate stated that Transportation will apply for a grant and then RFP along with the consultant.
- Georgia asked about the funding. Mariate stated that \$150,000 from the Federal Government for marketing plan and Council approved \$30,000.
- Hanna asked the members who would sit in on the color scheme task force meetings. Tom, Kevin and Paul volunteered to attend. Paul was chosen. Hanna asked TC for wise words to Paul. Kevin asked to choose the color green as environmental or basic white for bus wraps and maintenance. Dave Hastings suggested a color as a safety factor. Tom suggested having two separate colors for the panels in case of an accident. This would make it easier to replace with one color rather than two colors.

- **Bus passes for Homeless initiative enrollees:** Cecil Bothwell suggested bringing this idea to TC. Brown Newman suggested buying free passes for the homeless. After a long discussion among the members and staff Hanna made the motion to not supply bus passes to the homeless; and all were in favor.

- **City smoking ban:** Mariate announced that this will be a problem at parks and all of city property. No smoking at the Transit Center. Signs and notices will be posted at the Transit Center and at the garage where the bus drivers and mechanics smoke. Tom mentioned that at the Civic Center the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor has been allocated. Tom made the motion to have smoke area at the Transit Center and garage; J Neal second. Hanna opposed the motion. A vote among the TC as follows: 2 for and 5 against. Edna would like to confirm with the non-smoking policy. Out of 35 drivers 15 are smokers. Another vote was suggested asking Council for a dispensation to have the garage as a smoking area.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

- **City council presentation:** Paul will report to Council on the color scheme for the new buses.
- **Strive Not to Drive Week** – see schedule attached – Kevin volunteered to at the Lexington Avenue Brewery, all four days.
- **Transit Commission Presentation Schedule:** J. Neal will schedule a presenter.

## **STAFF UPDATES:**

- Transit Master Plan (TMP) – Mariate stated that at the last Council meeting the improvements for the TMP were approved which includes: operational changes; 30 minute corridors in 4 areas: Haywood, Brevard, Biltmore-Mission, Forest Drive; to bring Route 12 from Biltmore to McDowell to Biltmore Village; stagger routes 8 and 14 to Biltmore Village to McDowell. Council approved moving evening service up by one hour and some on the day routes, with a saving of approximately \$65,000. TMP also

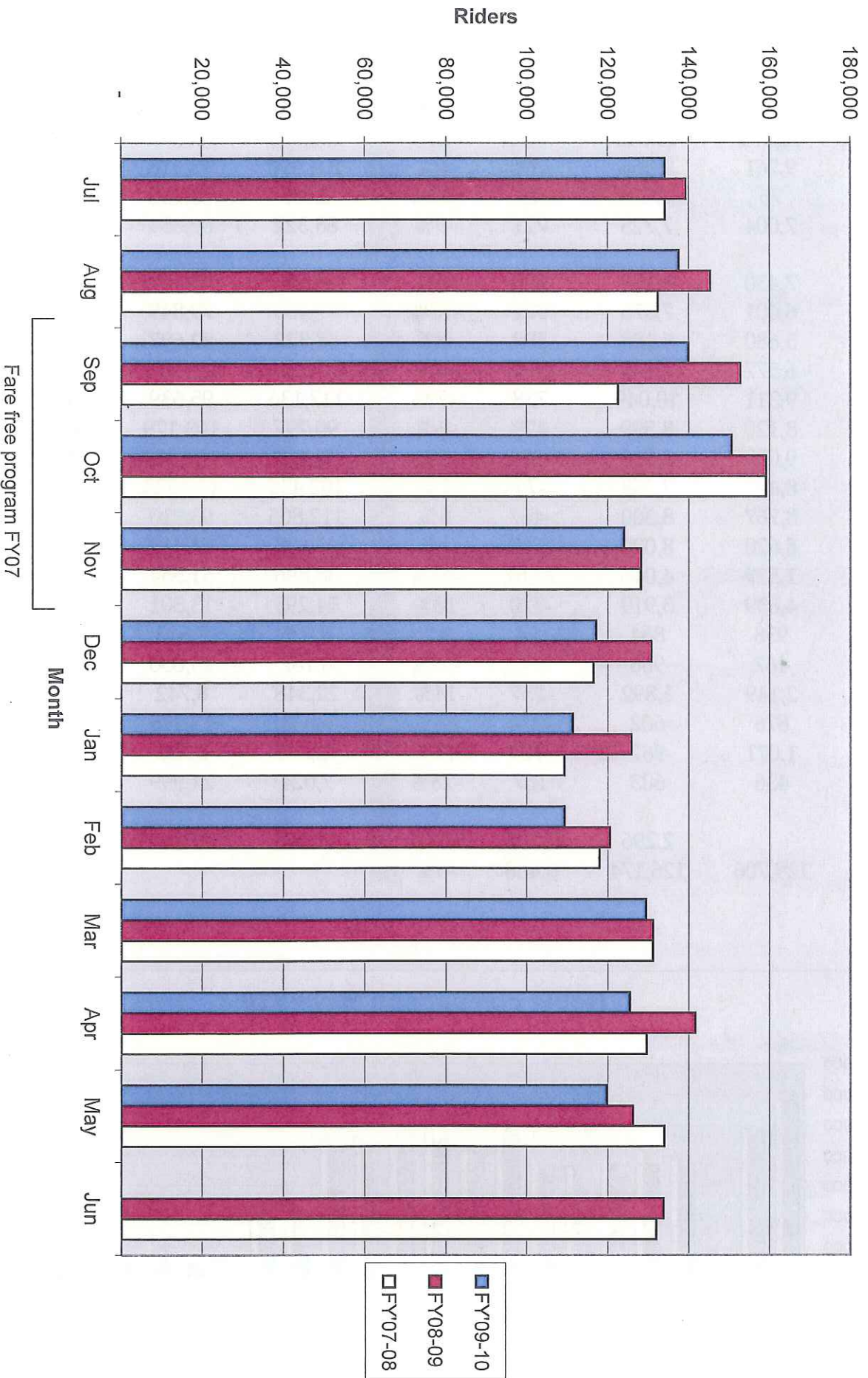
recommending ending at 10:30pm rather than 11:30pm. Mariate stated that the timeline is about 4 to 6 months for implementation. Mariate announced the public hearing for fare increases on 5/27 in which changes are small.

- **Ambassador Program:** Mariate has researched with other cities with the following results:
  - Durham has an ambassador for specific events and fairs. Due to difficulty to have enough volunteers on a daily basis. California was the only place who has 5 people at the transit stations to include background checks. Mariate suggested beginning with a small concept; to have as an outreach in schools on how to ride the bus. Hanna mentioned that having volunteers at Bele Chere is a good idea to start. Mariate mentioned to have outreach concept once a month and promote it. Hanna asked about the funding. Mariate stated that we are not looking for funding but will present to Ken and manage something with resources. Hanna mentioned to have a volunteer on call.
- **Black Mountain Route:** Mariate stated that she had a conference call with Miriam Perry regarding Mountain Mobility, Black Mountain and City of Asheville. Black Mountain as we know it will not be funded. Miriam Perry may consider in 6 months to transition and ask the stakeholder for a long term plan for long term funding. Warren Wilson College (WWC) route to building on Black Mountain route and transfer near WWC. Mountain Mobility to consider JARC funding Trailblazer; City of Asheville fund by WWC rate; WWC willing to change route to continue service to Black Mountain since all of the funding is tied together. Tom as if WWC contributes – Mariate stated that WWC contributes 40% of the route b/c the goal at WWC is not to have cars on campus.
- **Ridership** – stats attached with May's minutes.
- **Announcements:** J Neal announced Downtown after Five; bike riders will have a special place to park vehicles.
- **June Agenda:** Paul mentioned City Council presenter;

**6:30 pm Adjourned:** J Neal motion for adjournment, Tom second and all were in favor.



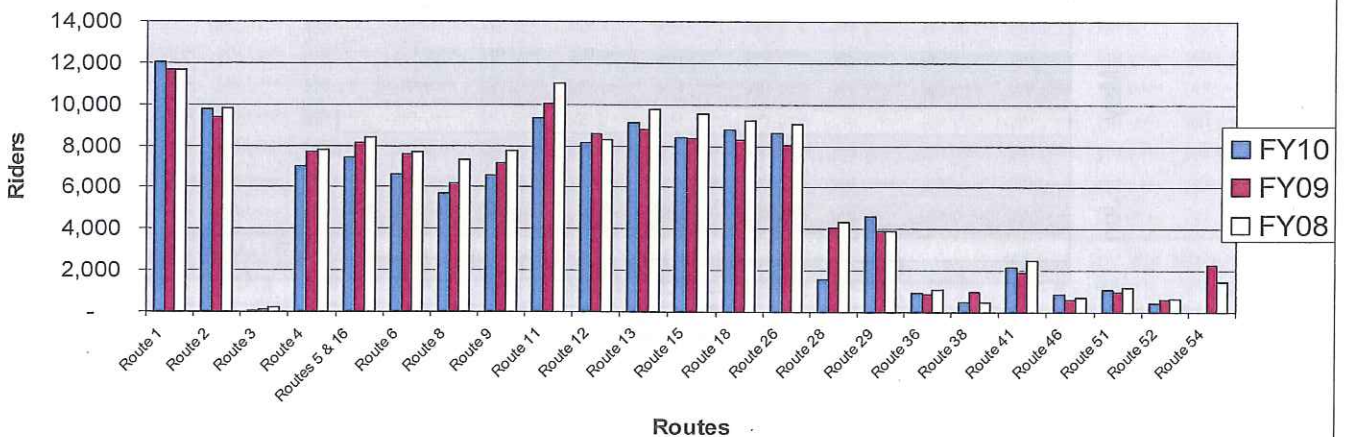
# Ridership Comparison



# Route Ridership-May, 2010

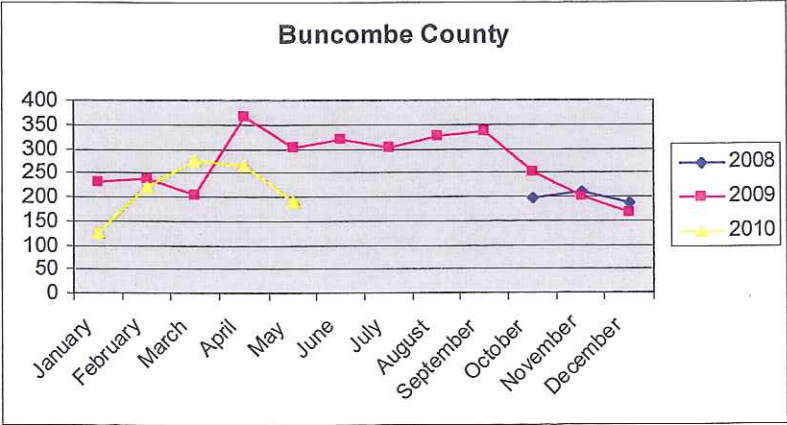
Current Month					Fiscal Year to Date			
Route	This Year	Last Year	Change	Delta	This Year	Last Year	Change	Delta
1	12,072	11,640	-432	4%	130,986	110,167	20,819	19%
2	9,761	9,366	-395	4%	104,690	12,910	91,780	711%
3	76	117	41	-35%	2,665	78,955	-76,290	-97%
4	7,004	7,725	721	-9%	88,322	89,654	-1,332	-1%
5 &								
16	7,430	8,120	690	-8%	88,056	85,441	2,615	3%
6	6,601	7,573	972	-13%	77,183	79,849	-2,666	-3%
8	5,680	6,188	508	-8%	68,322	82,697	-14,375	-17%
9	6,577	7,148	571	-8%	77,237	121,871	-44,634	-37%
11	9,311	10,049	738	-7%	117,136	95,639	21,497	22%
12	8,120	8,599	479	-6%	90,297	103,179	-12,882	-12%
13	9,098	8,814	-284	3%	98,457	100,073	-1,616	-2%
15	8,434	8,358	-76	1%	102,430	113,933	-11,503	-10%
18	8,767	8,300	-467	6%	112,805	93,910	18,895	20%
26	8,620	8,022	-598	7%	95,628	54,113	41,515	77%
28	1,579	4,046	2,467	-61%	38,896	51,554	-12,658	-25%
29	4,639	3,919	-720	18%	54,295	13,501	40,794	302%
36	938	864	-74	9%	8,976	7,513	1,463	19%
38	467	966	499	-52%	8,182	23,050	-14,868	-65%
41	2,149	1,892	-257	14%	22,348	8,742	13,606	156%
46	876	602	-274	46%	6,833	13,215	-6,382	-48%
51	1,071	967	-104	11%	12,899	8,936	3,963	44%
52	436	603	167	-28%	7,024	24,599	-17,575	-71%
54		2,296	2,296	100%	18,568	1,376,449	-1,357,881	-99%
	119,706	126,174	6,468	-5%				

## Route comparison May FY10

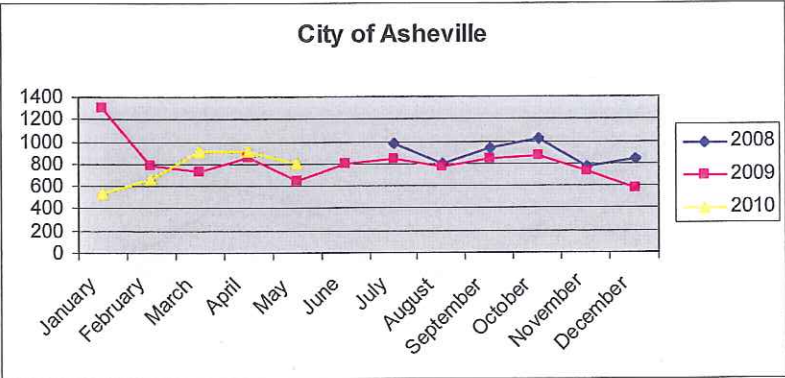




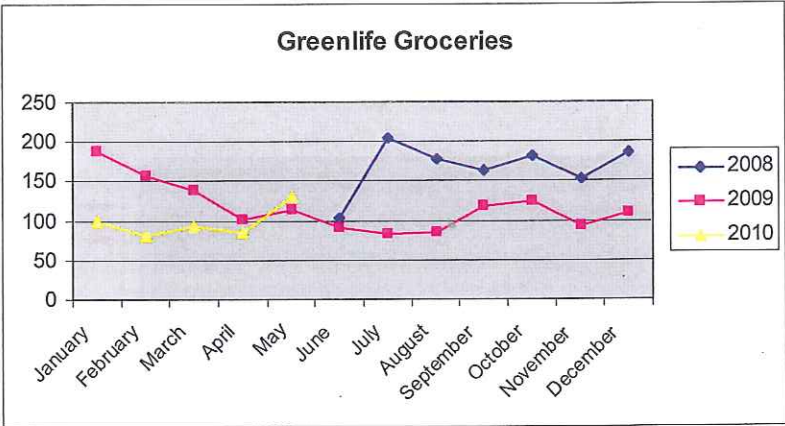
<i>Buncombe County</i>			
	2008	2009	2010
January		231	127
February		236	222
March		204	275
April		366	264
May		302	189
June		319	
July		301	
August		324	
September		334	
October	195	251	
November	209	199	
December	187	165	
<b>Year Totals</b>	591	3232	1077
<b>Overall Totals</b>	4900		



<i>City of Asheville</i>			
	2008	2009	2010
January		1306	530
February		779	664
March		733	916
April		850	906
May		643	794
June		793	
July	976	838	
August	797	774	
September	940	844	
October	1018	873	
November	770	735	
December	835	575	
<b>Year Totals</b>	5336	9743	3810
<b>Overall Totals</b>	18889		



<i>Greenlife</i>			
	2008	2009	2010
January		188	100
February		156	80
March		138	94
April		101	85
May		113	131
June	103	90	
July	205	82	
August	177	84	
September	164	117	
October	181	125	
November	152	93	
December	185	109	
<b>Year Totals</b>	1167	1396	490
<b>Overall Totals</b>	3053		



<b>Grove Park Inn</b>				
	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
January		1993	1592	913
February		2156	1198	1119
March		2225	1305	1205
April		2128	1386	1268
May		2356	1366	942
June		2298	1509	
July		2520	1345	
August		2494	1387	
September		2659	1376	
October		2552	1410	
November	1268	1863	1042	
December	1969	1676	1167	
<b>Year Totals</b>	3237	26920	16083	5447
<b>Overall Totals</b>	<b>51687</b>			



<b>UNCA</b>					
	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
January		2433	3140	4777	2020
February		2860	4041	4562	3346
March		3536	3346	3554	3335
April		3163	3906	3891	3433
May		2010	2870	1803	2248
June		1529	2882	1253	
July		1816	2692	1677	
August		3611	5336	3118	
September		4512	6755	3897	
October		4881	6169	3935	
November	1285	3452	4444	3234	
December	1754	2443	3649	2124	
<b>Year Totals</b>	3039	36246	49230	37825	14382
<b>Overall Totals</b>	<b>140722</b>				

